1: Ammar E, I-5 (1951) 1954
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Silwa

Koran, and readings of the Prophet's birthday story. During all this, the children would either be sitting behind the adults or clustered in one of the corners of the house ready to execute their elders' commands.

Later on, the actual circumcising of the boy takes place. The child is now the centre of attention. He sits on the ground with a colourful girl's headcloth round his neck, while the village barber shaves his head, a task which should occupy him for three or four hours before performing the operation. Meanwhile, as the women are rejoicing by singing and playing on the tambourine inside the house, the father's invited relatives and friends would be bringing along their contributions (nakout) of money or of corn. Every time the father receives a contribution, he tells an announcer, who is a specialist for this job, that so-and-so has delivered his contribution. The announcer in a chanting voice declares that so-and-so, adding his relationship to the child if he is a close relative, or just adding paternal uncle or maternal uncle, has presented the 'bridegroom' with silver and gold, and entreats God to compensate him with all the good things in the world. The name of one contributor might be announced more than once, and this depends on the amount of contribution, and the closeness of relationship to the child. After each contribution, the village barber shaves, or at least pretends to shave, a little more of the boy's hair. When the father sees that all those whom he has invited or expected to contribute have arrived, the announcer retires, by which time the barber has finished shaving the boy.[1] Then the actual circumcision takes place by seating the child on a large vessel. The instruments for the operation are nowadays given to the barber by the Ministry of Health as well as instructions and ointment for the post-operative treatment.

Just before the operation begins, the child casts off the girl's headcloth and puts on a new garment consisting of an open white shift covered by another open green garment, similar to the type of dress which a religious person is expected to wear on certain occasions. During the operation, the boy is encouraged not to cry or show any signs of pain, otherwise he would be accused of girlishness. He is held back, and forcibly prevented from looking at his penis, otherwise it is believed he would become impotent.

This is immediately followed by a procession of men and boys followed by women and girls to visit the mosque, after which a group of female relatives and friends of the mother, together with the children, take the child to gaze on the Nile water. During all this, sweets, dates, and peanuts would be distributed. For a whole week the child, wearing charms round his neck, is not encouraged to walk, and is fed not so much on bread or meat, but mainly on boiled eggs, dried peas, salted peanuts and rice.

After a week or ten days, the circumcised boy is taken with other boys on a round asking for the 'custom' (al-'ada) from relatives and neighbours, and friends in the village. On this occasion all the boys carry palm-tree

[1] If the boy is too young for a head shave, his older brother or cousin may take his place.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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far as I know, from private individuals. It is very different in England, where the hospitals for children and adults alike are supported by voluntary contributions. It is not that charity is lacking in Egypt—far from it; but for *organized* charity such as we have in England there is a crying need.

It is not altogether surprising, considering the state of ignorance in which they exist, that the mental outlook of most of the villagers is low. As far as the women are concerned, there is nothing to raise it. Sexual matters form the chief topic of their conversation, and this has a most degrading effect both on them and on their children, before whom they discuss the most private matters without the slightest reserve. Thus the children from their very early years hear subjects spoken of and joked about in a manner that is most revolting to educated people. What chance have the children in such circumstances of growing up into pure-minded men and women? I am told (for such conversation rarely takes place in my presence) that the women are far greater offenders in this respect than the men, who usually refrain from discussing their wives with outsiders. Whether this is true or not I am not in a position to say, but at any rate the children, and especially the girls, who are more constantly with their mothers than the boys, hear the most private sexual matters openly discussed, and in such a way as to poison their minds at the very outset of their lives. Marriage is, of course, the one and only aim in life among the girls, and the desire to get a husband is encouraged in every way by the mothers. It is quite a pitiful sight to see a little girl decked out in all the jewellery she can muster, dressed in a gaily coloured frock decorated with beads and jangles (Fig. 17), and with a veil drawn coquettishly across her face, standing about the village street, or outside the house, obviously on the look-out to attract some man. In all this they are aided and abetted by their mothers, who regard it as a compliment to themselves as well as to their daughters if the latter are sought after as wives at an early age. The Egyptian Government is endeavouring to prohibit the very early marriages which have been usual in the past, and there is now a law forbidding a girl to marry till she is sixteen and a boy till he is eighteen. However, in small, out-of-the-way villages the law has been disobeyed to my certain knowledge in more than one case. False ages were, I suppose, given to the *kâḍi*, as the man who draws up the marriage contracts is called; and he, in view of the fee he

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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obtains for his business, probably refrained from examining the statement as to age made by the girl's parents.

The childbearing age lasts over a long period, for girls mature early, and it is a common thing in Egypt for a woman of fifty to give birth to a child. From an economic point of view it is probably an advantage that so many of the children die, for otherwise the country would soon become over-populated. What is so desirable is that those who do survive should be brought up in healthier surroundings, both moral and physical, and without the unnecessary suffering inflicted upon them by the ignorance of the mothers.

FIG. 17. YOUNG GIRL DRESSED UP TO ATTRACT A HUSBAND

In spite of the frequently indecent talk on sexual matters, there is a strict moral code, especially with regard to unmarried girls, the infringement of which often entails a terrible punishment. This seems somewhat unfair on the girls, considering the atmosphere in which they are brought up. If a girl has misconducted herself before marriage, and is discovered at marriage to be unchaste, the disgrace to her family is looked upon as such a terrible one that her own parents will often kill her, sometimes taking the unfortunate child—for she is hardly more than a child—into the desert, and there dispatching her, usually, I

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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and from what the woman said I fear that it was syphilis from which he was suffering. Anyhow, she told me that if the father or mother suffered in this way their children were never washed at all until they were old enough to wash themselves. Two doctor friends of mine confirmed this, stating that they knew the practice to be a common one among the peasants. As for the child which was brought to me, I am glad to say that I at last persuaded the mother to wash it to a certain extent, and I gave her some medicine. This happened a few years ago, and on my visiting the same village again some time later I was glad to hear that the child was well and flourishing.

FIG. 35. FROCK AND HOOD MADE OF SACKING

The same woman had lost several children in early infancy before this particular infant was born. The child was wearing a peculiar dress, made of sacking, and with a hood in one piece with the frock (Fig. 34). The woman informed me, and I have been told the same thing by others, that this dress was put on the child to make it live. The dress must always be made out of a sack which has contained raw cotton; no other kind will do. Two such dresses were made and given to me (see Fig. 35).

On the seventh day after the birth a midwife comes and washes the child, as stated above, and also the mother. The water used

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD

I have been told that if a woman remains for a long time after marriage without the prospect of a child she will pray for a son, promising that, in the event of her prayer being answered, she will have the boy's hair shaved, leaving only the tufts, which she will dedicate to the sheikh or sheikhs, or to the saint or saints, with whom she has interceded. When offering such prayers she will probably repair to the tomb of the sheikh, or to the church of the Coptic saint, to whom she wishes to appeal. I was told in Fayûm Province that if a boy is seen with his hair cut into tufts it means that he is an only son, and that this style of headdress will ensure him a long life. The initial cutting of the hair, it should be pointed out, is performed at home.

F 782 842
F [118]
F [76]

Among the Copts the rite of circumcision should be observed before baptism, according to Dr Butler.[1] The actual ceremony closely resembles the Muslim rite, so that the following description applies to the followers of both religions, the only difference being that whereas the Coptic child should have this operation before baptism, for the Muslim there is no limitation as to age, though it is always carried out during the early years of a child's life. The ceremony entails a certain expense, and is therefore sometimes carried out conjointly with a marriage ceremony, so that the cost may be shared.

F C 851 304
F C [302]

The boy who is to undergo this operation has his hands and feet dyed with *ḥenna* at sunset two days before it takes place. On the following day the barber comes and cuts the boy's hair in a particular way, called *muḥarraṣ*, which means 'made into little loaves or cakes.' I do not think that this form of hairdressing is in any way connected with the tufts of hair described above. After the haircutting the boy is washed, and, so I was told, coins are put on his face. This is probably the same custom as is observed at weddings, when the female visitors who wish to present the bride with small sums of money go up to her and place the coin they wish to give to her on her upturned face. In the case of the boy the money presented in this way is taken by the barber. The boy then has a particular kind of felt cap placed on his head. This cap, which is white in colour, decorated with yellow designs and tassels (Fig. 40), is purchased by the parents especially for the occasion, and worn only for this rite. The cap is further decorated by the attachment of scraps of coloured paper or bits of cloth or muslin. The boy, thus attired, is then placed on a horse, usually, I believe, with his face toward the animal's tail; he is covered up with a shawl, and, with one man holding him securely and another leading

F C [463]
F C [431] [465]
F C [242]

[1] See my article in *Man*, vol. xxv, p. 263.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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the horse, he is paraded through the village, accompanied by musicians. If two brothers are to have this operation at the same time they ride together on one horse. When the perambulation of the village is over the boy is taken home, and all the friends who have placed money on his face, and also the barber, are provided with supper. Music plays an important part at this ceremony, and the musicians keep up a constant beating of drums, clashing of cymbals, and blowing of bagpipes. When the guests have finished supper they all, including the musicians, take their departure. On the following morning the barber only comes to the house and is first paid by the parents, who give him anything from one or two pounds upward. The child is then taken hold of and told not to be afraid. Some one tries to attract his attention, while the barber seizes this opportunity to cut off the foreskin. The boy wears a white *gallabîyeh* for this occasion, with long sleeves, in one of which the foreskin is tied up. The barber then ties the boy's mother and maternal aunt together by binding a turban round their throats, and drags them outside the door of the house. Friends, who by this time have collected outside, come into the house and present the barber with more money, and he then takes his departure. The wound is washed every day, and is anointed with some healing powder, which is, I fancy, *henna*. The foreskin remains in the sleeve of the boy's *gallabîyeh* until the wound is healed, during which period the white gown must also be worn.

FIG. 40. CAP WORN BY A BOY AT HIS CIRCUMCISION CEREMONY

A charm consisting of short lengths of the mid-rib of a palm-branch, deeply notched along one side, is worn by boys after they have been circumcised to keep the wound from going septic, and to ward off the evil eye. Such a charm is worn for seven days after the operation, being suspended from the neck by a string.

No reason could be given as to why the mother and maternal aunt were tied together by the throat and thrust out of the house.

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt
Copts MR10

E 585

and that the procession is accompanied by men carrying lanterns and candles. As they proceed the women utter their *zaghārīt*. The priest addresses the pair, but before he does so he takes a silken thread and passes it over the right shoulder of the bridegroom and under his left arm, where he ties the thread into a knot with a loop. After the address from the priest is over the bridegroom pays him a sum of money, and then the priest undoes the knotted thread. He then takes the two engagement rings which the bride and bridegroom gave each other at their betrothal and ties them together with a silken thread. After putting certain questions to the pair he returns them their rings, and each puts his or her ring on; the bridegroom does not place the ring on the bride's finger.

E 585 537

After the service is over the priest invites anyone present who may wish to do so to speak. Perhaps one man may get up and deliver an oration, in which, in addition to various other complimentary remarks, he will probably compare the bride to the moon, and the bridegroom to the sun. Others will follow his example, and even women are permitted to speak on such occasions. The bridegroom then either himself thanks his friends for their kindly speeches or asks his father or his brother to do this for him.

E 585 292

Both bride and bridegroom wear new clothes on the occasion of their marriage, and they wear these garments for seven days after the wedding. When this period has elapsed these clothes are put away for several days, and then they can be worn at any time.

E 585 789

When the bride is on her way to the bridegroom's house her unmarried female friends who accompany her thither pinch her on one of her thighs. By doing this they believe that they also will soon get a husband. The bridegroom is pinched in the same way by his unmarried male friends, who hope that this will ensure each of them a bride. I am told that this is a common custom among the *fellāḥīn*.

On the morning after the marriage night the bridegroom when he goes out pulls a branch off a palm-tree, tears off all the leaves, and then cuts off a long length of the thicker end of the mid-rib as a stick. He then splits up one end of it several times, so that these split ends stand out slightly. With this split stick he strikes any of his unmarried male friends whom he happens to meet. Those whom he thus strikes will, it is believed, shortly marry too. This, according to my informant, is a very old custom which was formerly

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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THE FELLĀḤĪN OF UPPER EGYPT

Some of the women brought with them large baskets full of bread-rings, and with these they rewarded the *fuḳahā* for their recitations, which are believed to be of great benefit to the dead. The bread used on these occasions is in this part of Egypt nearly always made in the ring shape, and sweets of all kinds, cakes, etc., are also brought for distribution, especially by the richer people. There was usually a certain number of the very poorest people present, as well as children, who had come in the hope of receiving a share in the gifts. One of these suppliants might say, "*Iddīnī*

FIG. 53. WOMEN CROUCHING OVER A GRAVE

ḥaseneḥ, yā sitt" ("Give me *ḥaseneḥ*, O lady"). The word *ḥaseneḥ* means charity, and is a general term for the bread, etc., given away on these occasions; the bread, as I have mentioned above, being called *kaḥḳ*.

On presenting bread to the *fuḳahā* or to the poor the giver will say, "*Khud kaḥḳ 'ala rōḥ el-fulān*" ("Take a cake on behalf of the soul of so and so"), mentioning the name of the dead relation. It is quite a moving sight to see the faces of the women contorted with grief, the tears streaming down their cheeks, as they crouch over the graves, swaying backward and forward (Fig. 53). They hold in their hands coloured handkerchiefs, generally of silk, used only on these occasions or at a funeral. Sometimes a large one, often black with a coloured border, is doubled cornerwise and

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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placed round the neck of the mourner. With this she can vary her movements, taking hold of the handkerchief at either end and drawing it backward and forward, like a saw, while she sways rhythmically from side to side. It should be mentioned here that all these movements, including those of the *fuḳahā* when reciting, are strictly rhythmical.

With the smaller handkerchiefs with which the women wipe the tears from their cheeks they also pat and stroke the grave. On one occasion I saw a young woman acting in this manner just as if she were affectionately stroking a living person. She then knocked on

FIG. 54. DISTRIBUTION OF BREAD-RINGS AT THE GRAVESIDE.

the grave as if to attract the attention of the dead man who lay below, crying, as she did so, "*Yā abūi, yā abūi!*" ("O my father, my father!"). Some of the apparently grief-stricken mourners were professional wailing women, and often as I passed them, in the midst of what sounded like heartbroken sobs, they would look up at me, smiling in a friendly way, only to resume their sorrowful attitude the moment I left them.

Those who can afford it often bring several large baskets of bread for distribution. I have seen six or seven such baskets piled up on a single grave, where a large party was assembled, a number of wailing women being seated at one end, while at the other was a group of men and boys. The men were *fuḳahā* who, swaying from side to side, were reciting passages from the Ḳorān, accompanied, as is very often the case, by the boys. When one set of recitations came to an end each performer had two or three bread-

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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mourning, which could easily be distinguished by the number of men seated outside it; these observed almost complete silence, instead of carrying on an animated conversation as they would have done in happier circumstances.

I was courteously received by the men and conducted to the apartment in which the women were assembled. The house was one of the type always to be found in Egyptian villages, built of crude bricks, and with steep, rough steps inside the building leading up to the roof. In the first room which we entered lay the coffin—a long, narrow box, made of planks of wood hastily nailed together, over which was stretched a covering of black cloth decorated with white crosses and other designs in *appliqué*. We passed through this room into an inner apartment, in which a large number of women were sitting on the ground, uttering from time to time piercing cries of grief. The sister of the dead man came toward me, her hair and dress dishevelled. As she advanced she swayed from side to side in a kind of dance, keeping both arms extended. She at once conducted me into a small room which led out of that occupied by the women. It was dark except for a glimmer of light which penetrated through the half-open door. A mattress was on the floor—indeed, it occupied most of the available space—and on it was stretched the body of the dead man, covered with a coloured sheet. From the end of the room, which was in pitch darkness, came the piercing cries of wailing women. Presently the sister drew aside the coverlet and invited me to take a seat on the mattress beside the dead man. This was no doubt very polite of her, but it was rather more than I could stand—not that I feared the dead, but because the mattress was almost certain to be covered with vermin. I managed to evade the offer without hurting anyone's feelings, and returned to the larger concourse of women in the adjoining room. Each of these women had a coloured handkerchief—green, blue, or purple, or some of these colours combined—such as are carried by women at all funerary ceremonies. Some of them possessed two such handkerchiefs knotted together. They held them in front of them, stretched out at full length, and as they swayed from side to side, wailing and bemoaning the dead, they would wave the handkerchiefs up and down. The faces of the women, as well as their hands and arms, were smeared with blue dye.

Presently I went out to speak to the men, who evidently dis-

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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MAGICIANS AND MAGIC

This time the sheikh said, " I want silver anklets and nice clothes, and she must not be miserable."

After a week the ceremony called *ṣulḥeh* (p. 186) was celebrated, the procedure being as follows. A sheep is killed, and some of its blood is put on the dress of the woman who is possessed, the people singing and playing their musical instruments all the time. Seven candles are brought and placed round a large brass tray set in the centre of the room, either on the floor or on a stand. Seven kinds of sweetmeats, including dates, almonds, and raisins, are heaped up in the centre of the tray and covered with a bowl, on the top of which is placed one of the candles. All the seven candles are now lighted, and the people present, including the patient, eat, an extra supply being offered to the officiating magician, male or female. One of the people present hands the magician a five-piastre piece, which he dips in the blood of the sheep. At the *ṣulḥeh* held on behalf of the above-mentioned woman it was her brother who gave the money. The coin is wrapped in a piece of cotton stuff and given to the possessed man or woman, who will have it enclosed in a leather case and wear it always hung from the neck and passed under the left arm. This is a charm, and is supposed to be a present to the sheikh who possesses him or her. Such a charm is called a *lāzimeh* (an obligatory gift).

On one of the occasions when I was present at a *zār* a man came in, sat down for some time, and then went out. I was told afterward that his sheikh did not like the songs that were being sung, and so he could not remain in the room. When one of the possessed women who was present at this *zār* stood up and danced she began to bark like a dog, and her whole expression changed, her face becoming drawn and haggard. On another occasion a man became very violent, hurling himself about and striking out, so that it took three or four other men to hold him. When once this fit of excitement had passed his face assumed a calm and placid look.

Women on these occasions wear special ornaments (Fig. 120), if they can afford them, and must wear good clothes. People who are possessed by sheikhs are often supposed to be able to divine where a stolen article has been hidden. A young man of my acquaintance once lost a key. Thinking that one of his fellow-students had stolen it, he went to a man who was possessed, and, after giving him a small sum of money, asked him which of the students had stolen it. The man told him that none of them had

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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Upper Egypt

had been erected, wherein butchers and vendors of sweetmeats, toys, and other wares plied their trade, to all appearance doing excellent business (Fig. 143).

Eggs dyed a bright cerise or yellow are a special feature of all these *mawālid*, and those who sold them attracted a considerable number of customers. These coloured eggs, which are also sold on the Coptic Easter Monday, are used for two games, which are played as follows. In one game two boys or men take part, each grasping an egg in his hand. One of them knocks his egg against that of his opponent, and the man whose egg is not cracked is regarded as the winner and takes the cracked egg of his adversary. In the other game several eggs are arranged in a row on the ground, and a number of men sit at a certain distance away from them. Each in turn rolls an egg toward the row of eggs facing him, and the man who first succeeds in cracking one of them wins the lot. These games are played by large numbers of people at all *mawālid*, but never by women and girls. Coloured eggs are used for games, in many cases similar to these, in various parts of Europe, especially in the Balkan states. Again, in some of the Northern counties of England coloured eggs are still used in a game played on Easter Monday which closely resembles the second Egyptian game.

FIG. 141. FEMALE 'SERVANT' OF THE SHEIKH UMBĀRAK, WRAPPED IN THE SHEIKH'S FLAG ON THE DAY OF HIS MŪLID

There were other attractions at this *mūlid* of the sheikh Umbārak. In the palm-grove a conjurer in one part and a poet

[Text continues on p. 255]

2: Blackman E-5 (1920-1926) 1927
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Ancient Egypt MR5

THE FELLĀḤĪN OF UPPER EGYPT

in an inscription of Ramesses III at Medīnet Habu,[1] and the Egyptian peasants seem to have been wearing a garment very like the latter, only sleeveless, by the early Ptolemaic period, judging from the reliefs in the tomb of Petosiris at Derweh;[2] but the *gallabīyeh* may date back even to the Sixth Dynasty.[3] It should be observed that women wearing veils on their heads like those worn by the modern peasant women in many parts of Egypt occur several times in those reliefs in the tomb of Petosiris that are executed in Greek style.[4]

It might here be mentioned that blue was the colour for mourning in ancient Egypt,[5] and that dark blue as well as black is still the mourning colour in modern Egypt (see pp. 50, 111, 264, 295).

I have not, as I should, referred in the previous chapters to the custom of washing before and after a meal and before private and public prayers. This is a very old custom and is often referred to in the ancient Egyptian literary and religious texts.[6]

It was evidently considered as important to have a large family in ancient as it is in modern Egypt (see p. 97). The sage Anii advises his son to "take a wife when thou art a youth, that she may give thee a son. Thou shouldst beget him for thee whilst thou art yet young, and shouldst live to see him become a man [?]. Happy is the man who hath much people, and he is respected because of his children."[7]

Several of the ceremonies connected with birth can be shown to be of ancient origin. Apart from the reference in the Old Testament,[8] the existence of professional midwives in ancient Egypt is suggested by the account of the birth of the divinely begotten triplets of Red-djedet in the tales of *King Kheops and the Magicians*, which dates from the time of the Twelfth Dynasty (2000–1788 B.C.).[9] In earliest times the Egyptian women squatted to

[1] J. H. Breasted, *Ancient Records*, vol. iv (Chicago, 1906), § 47.
[2] M. G. Lefebvre, *Tombeau de Petosiris*, vol. iii (Cairo, 1924), Pls. XII–XV.
[3] See W. M. F. Petrie, *Deshasheh* (London, 1898), pp. 31 f.
[4] M. G. Lefebvre, *op. cit.*, Pls. XIX, XX, XLXVI.
[5] A. H. Gardiner, *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache*, vol. xlvii, pp. 162 f.
[6] For a number of interesting references see A. M. Blackman, "Purification (Egyptian)," in Hastings, *op. cit.*, vol. x, pp. 477, 480 f., *Luxor and its Temples*, p. 7, *Journal of Egyptian Archæology*, vol. v, pp. 153, 154 and note 5.
[7] A. Erman, *op. cit.*, p. 235.
[8] Exodus i. 16.
[9] A. Erman, *op. cit.*, pp. 44 ff.

241 This 'leaven of the land' has still to be put to the soil.
242 Twenty times a day the donkey, laden with great panniers
292 or sacks and driven by the fellah's son, carries the manure
293 to the field and goes back to reload. There are no carts or barrows for this work, and the distances are often great. The farmer lays down the manure generously, whether it be natural humus or chemical fertiliser, and packs it by hand round the plant to be encouraged.

Getting in the Crops

461 All this attention is paid to the soil in order that it may yield its fruits. It follows that the fellah's work must continue from seed-time till harvest. The days are gone when he could go away after sowing and return in a few months' time to gather the crop. The struggle for life has become continuous and unrelenting. Since the introduction of cotton and the establishment of perennial irrigation, the fellah has no slack season and is always tending some crop or other.

241 The crops follow a system of rotation covering a period
805 of two or three years. Taking cotton first, the succession
221 will be as follows:

February-October	Cotton
November-May	Wheat, berseem or barley
May-June	(Partly fallow)
June-November	Maize or rice
December-February	Berseem
April-October	Cotton
November-May	Winter cereals or berseem
May-November	Maize (or fallow)
November-March	Berseem or winter cereals
March-June	(Partly fallow)
June-October	Maize or rice
November-March	Berseem

This calendar of crop rotation is observed with but little variation everywhere in the country, according to the need and experience of the farmer. I have translated it into Gregorian months; but the fellaheen keep to the Coptic Calendar, which is based on the Nile flood and goes back to ancient times. It begins with the month of *Tût* (September), in which the Nile reaches its highest level, and divides the solar year into twelve months. There is a series of Arabic
[538] proverbs deriving originally from Pharaonic Egypt, which

consist of a red, pink or varicoloured petticoat and wide coloured drawers. The *fellaha* does her own rather clumsy sewing, but the cloth is bought.

The cotton stuffs, calicos and other fabrics used for the fellah's clothing come mostly from Japan, Italy and India. Imports from other countries are becoming more and more insignificant as the Egyptian weaving industry develops. The indigo or black dyes are produced in the country, and all the clothes are made up in Egypt. *Gallabiyas* and dresses are made to measure; shirts, drawers, waistcoats and caps are ready-made. Jewish commission agents often undertake to supply the big villages with the necessary quantities of material or ready-made clothes. The goods are sold just before the big feasts. The old wool-spinners and local weavers provide only a small part of the total supply (**).

The dullness of the women's attire is relieved by striking ornaments. Round the neck they wear strings of big yellow or blue beads; on their wrists a number of bracelets made, according to wealth or fancy, of glass, silver or even gold; on their ankles the *kholkhal*, a massive anklet of bronze, silver or gold, which takes the place of our wedding ring and must always be worn by a married woman. Everything else may be sold, but not this. If there is a bereavement in the family a woman lays aside her ear-rings, necklaces, and bracelets; the *kholkhal* she takes off only on the death of her lord and master. The women never wear socks or stockings, but sometimes use sandals or slippers like the men.

This strikingly simple clothing betokens an old civilisation and a supple adaptability to climate and practical needs. The fellah's loose, simple clothes permit him to breathe easily and to move freely. They keep the outlines of the human form in harmony with the countryside. On the other hand, they are dark-coloured and hot — the head-dress and the women's clothes at least — so that they absorb the sun's heat instead of reflecting it. Their excessive length hinders walking and stirs up the dust. However, the advantages outnumber the disadvantages, and the habits which have retained such a costume so long unchanged show a deep-rooted wisdom.

437 At last business is over. Before sundown, after interminable parleyings, the fellah goes home with goods or money calculated to increase his well-being, or at least with pleasant memories of a day full of sights and sounds.

484 571 Pilgrimages and markets swell the traffic on the country roads. Here again can be seen the love of the fellaheen for crowding together and moving only in congested groups.

484 If they have to cross the Nile or a canal to reach the village opposite, the fellaheen throng so densely into the [505 292 494] ferry-boat or raft (*ma'adiya*) that accidents are frequent. When they set out on foot or on donkey-back, laden with astonishing bundles, it looks like an evacuation. When for a long journey they take the *trombil* or *halazona* — an old Ford converted into a bus — forty of them push their way in where there is room for only twenty, and they take it very ill if police regulations are enforced. One of the reasons for a certain minister's unpopularity in the country was his insistence on applying these regulations. When they have [497] to travel by train, they arrive several hours beforehand, cluster on a corner of the platform, and scramble all together into one carriage, even if there is plenty of room elsewhere.

In general, then, the fellaheen like being together, out of doors and in crowds. They are sociable people. But does this mean that they are socially minded? Is there any organic relationship between the members of the peasant group?

361 181 Let us first of all consider the village as a whole. This with its surrounding land forms a closed system outside which everyone and everything is foreign and unknown. It leads a secluded and individual life, which is organised from within by habits, customs and taboos handed down from the distant past, immemorial laws which rule absolutely the acts and the pleasures of every inhabitant.

181 619 The fellah finds the same difficulty in widening his outlook in space as in projecting himself into the future and practising foresight. His village is all in all, for it is here and now. It is his country, and the limit of his patriotism.

When a fellah is asked about his nationality, he will reply: "I am from the village of Manfaloot, or Abu Korkas", and occasionally, a little more widely: "I am from the Mudiriya of Menufiya, or Assiut", but rarely, if ever, "I

PEASANT FUNERALS

764
133
291

Men and Women

A PEASEANT FAMILY

515
582
294
352
584
415

A head toilet.

The wedding procession

3: Ayrout M-5 (ca. 1935) 1945
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Copts MR10

APPENDIX A

A NOTE ON MOURNING CUSTOMS

Both Christians and Moslems, at the feasts of Christmas and Easter, or the Little and Great Bairam (**), have a custom of going to pray at the tombs of their dead. On these days the cemetery takes on the appearance of a market, in which people of all conditions meet together. Families are continuously arriving. The camel is used to transport the provisions, bedding, boxes and kitchen-ware. Sometimes the Nile has to be crossed. The people crowd pell-mell into ferry boats, weighing them down till they are almost awash. The children, with their best clothes on, are delighted with the journey, but the women are weeping. When they visit the cemetery for the first time after a burial they cry out in grief, calling on the dead. Some of them stain their faces with blue and wave their handkerchiefs. I have seen old women scarcely able to walk and broken down by age and sickness, dragging themselves on this funeral pilgrimage, which they feel obliged to make, and from which they may never return.

C F 765 769 C F [292 505] C F [152 302 987]

Then the blood of sacrifice flows over the tomb, and the meat is given to the poor. Such libations and charitable offerings are supposed to comfort the souls of the dead. The goats and sheep, feeling their end approaching, cry aloud in despair. Yet in the dazzling sunshine, the clouds of dust, the tumult of the crowd, there is something of the holiday spirit. Hawkers temptingly display their wares, little cafés are opened, swings draw the children away. The families separate, each to visit its own. The upper part of the tomb is often built into a dome or living-space. Here the family will settle itself, to weep for hour after hour, or to sleep. Happy are the dead who are remembered, and happier still those for whom prayers are said.

C F [782] C F [265 443] 764

When someone dies in the village, there is always a *mandara* (sitting-room) or a tent where the people go to offer

C F 764

4:Walker E-4 (no date) 1934 MR13 Fellahin MR13
(ca. 1890)

some other of the saints. All this is the result of ignorance arising from girls not being educated.

[Description of the *Zār*.]

"First of all the *Kūdīya* arose and placed a chair in the middle of the room and made our hostess, the mistress of the house, sit on it. She next produced [p. 75] two hens and a cock. She tied the legs of the hens together, placed the cock on her head and the two hens on her shoulders, and began reciting the appointed rigmarole and declaiming verses, whilst the birds for fear of her were screaming and shrieking until the place shook, and all the ladies were stroking their faces and saying: 'Please, oh, Lords! Help, oh, people of Allah! Pity, oh, my Lords!' whilst she was reciting and holding in her hand the drum which is called the *bandīr* in the parlance of the *Ṣūfīs* [lit. the people of the way]. Then she began pounding upon it and uttering incantations after that fashion, until when she ceased she took down the cock and the hens, and went out to the courtyard of the house, and brought in a ram, one of the best, and ordered it to be slaughtered. When it was stabbed she brought forth a dish and caught the blood in it, and ordered the lady to drink some of that blood, and anoint her limbs with it, which she did. We were all looking at what might make one's flesh creep. For we know that blood is forbidden, as much as the dead, or the flesh of the pig. When they were finished with these shocking actions, they surrounded her, having drums, and cymbals (*ṣunūg*) in their hands, and brought her in with, I fancy, greater ceremony than she had at her wedding, smeared as she was with blood in place of the wedding ornaments, until she sat in front of the *Kūdīya* and her followers. All sat in their places, and the ladies who were invited also sat down. The assembly composed itself and coffee was brought in, and they rested for half an hour. Then they took up their drums and began beating furiously with bewildering incantation. Meanwhile the lady was kneeling in front of the drummers with her head upside down [p. 76] on the ground till one of them came with a bundle of clothes consisting of a change of men's clothing, namely, an *'abā'a* [or cloak] embroidered with gold and silver thread in the best style. They opened it and brought out a robe of

Indian silk, its ends wrought with silver, a *farbūḵ* crowned with pearls, and added to that a sword and dagger both covered with silver. She girt herself with the sword and took the dagger in her hand and bowed herself in the midst of that august assembly, the instruments playing the while. Then she trembled and said: 'Peace be upon you.' They said, 'Welcome. Who are you?' She replied, 'I am the Shaikh 'Abd al-Salām.' So they played for her in the mode usual for the Shaikh afore-mentioned.

"Then she danced a merry, pleasing dance, until when the round was finished, the leader arose and massaged her. With that the Shaikh went his way. Thereat his wife, whose name is Sitt Ruḳḳaya, appeared and entered into the body of the woman, and said: 'Peace be upon you, ladies,' in a high tone with traces of affectation in it. Then she saluted the whole company, and demanded clothes and ornaments. They brought her seven changes of silk, each one a different colour, and each one embroidered with gold and silver thread, and upon every garment a piece of gauze (*burunguk*) of the same colour. They call it the head-veil (*Ṭarḥa*). It has old gold charms on its edges. They also presented her with gold or silver worked necklaces, bracelets, anklets, collars, armbands, and rings—much larger than the usual rings—and veils, and other things as well. Then they beat for her according to the seven modes, and with each mode she put on a different dress and variety of ornaments. And in the meantime there arose [p. 77] some of those, who had been invited, and danced with her. All their fine clothing was not inferior to what we have described; that of the beggar women (*faḳīrāt*) being of silver. If the value of what was in that place had been counted it would have exceeded seven hundred guineas in ornaments and jewels, etc.

"When they had finished that, the lady who was the wife of 'Abd al-Salām went off, after saying good-bye to the company. Then in came the little son of Shaikh 'Abd al-Salām, although in the bodily form of the woman. Then her circumstances altered and she returned to the state of childhood, and sat upon the ground playing like a child, and speaking like a child and lisping. But the artifice was evident. They played

FOLK MEDICINE IN MODERN EGYPT

The manner of the act was (for the *Shaikha*) to go with the unfortunate woman, whose husband had been turned from her, to a region far from sight where the "operator" (*mushabkhiba*) dyes her face and her hands with a black substance and puts on black clothing, and lets her hair down upon her shoulder and grasps in her hand three fruits. Then she takes the "patient" (*mushabkhab lahā*) by her side and burns incense, placing in it *kashīsh* and *'anzarūt* (or *Anzarūt*)[1] and *mansir* (?) or *mānistir* (?) and *faḥīsala* (I do not know its real medical name). Thereafter she says:

Yā 'afārīt yā 'afārīt	Oh, Spirits! Oh, Spirits!
Yā ginn al-gibāl	Oh, Jinn of the Mountains!
Yā sukkān al-buḥūr	Oh, dwellers of the seas!
Yā 'ummār al-burūr	Oh, inhabitants of lands!
Yā bu'ād fi'l-barrīya	Oh, far off folk in the desert!
Yā ḳātilīn al-darrīya[2]	Oh, slayers of offspring!
Yā mukhālifīn Sulīmān	Oh, oppenents of Solomon[3]
Yā mubarṭi'īn fi'l-widyān	Oh, gallopers in valleys!

I cry to you. Come to me, and help me with the stars of the sky.

Then it is said that the atmosphere becomes dusty and the day is changed to night, and the darkness becomes intensified, while she continues her spell, saying:

Good evening to you, oh, stars of evening! Oh, yellow ones like apricots! I have smitten him with three fruits (*thamarāt*) smite ye him with three live coals (*jamarāt*). (Thereupon she names the person in the case, and casts the fruits upon an image [p. 5] of the person made of clay which is in front of her). One ember will come upon his eyes so that he will see none but her [i.e. his forsaken wife]; and an ember upon his tongue so that he will speak with none but her; and an ember upon his ears so that he will listen to none but her. Good

[1] [Gum of a thorny tree that grows in the mountains of Persia. See the *Takhkara* of Dā'ūd al-Anṭākī, s.v. According to Dozy, *Supplément aux Dictionnaires arabes*, it is *trifolium odoratum*. Tr.]

[2] [i.e. *al-Dharriya*.]

[3] [These are the Jinn who, according to Moslem legends, were forced to assist King Solomon in his works of magic. Tr.]

4:Walker E-4 (no date) 1934 MR13 Fellahin MR13
(ca. 1890)

Such people keep on mentioning in detail all the possible things which are to be found in dwelling houses, pretending that all that year no misfortune will overtake the thing whose name is mentioned in this incantation. Strange to say the common people are not the only ones who believe in the imaginings of these devils, but many people of rank also, whom we would think above such futilities. It may be that the experience of the future will erase from the mind all the vain beliefs of the past, for often they were purveyors of destruction, and a means of ruin and mischief.

VII

A "MIRACLE"

Once in the provinces I heard a crowd asking a man, a poor *fellāḥ*, about the welfare of his buffalo. He said that it was "cured." I asked concerning the ailment and the curative drug. The man said: For two days the buffalo was yielding milk and blood. So I asked Rūma (an "old wife" of the village) about this question. She advised me to carry a halter of the buffalo at dawn [p. 20] and bury it in a forsaken grave, and, a little before morning, fetch it without anyone seeing me. I did that and the buffalo was "cured."

We hope that our brethren the veterinary surgeons will give us the advantage of the effect of this "remedy." We do not wish to enter into the medical treatment of animals, since they are more knowledgeable than we are regarding it, and to them may there be much gratitude and abundant praise!

VIII

MEASLES AND THE ALEXANDRIAN SHIRT

The *fellāḥīn* are in the habit of "curing" their children, who are smitten with measles, by clothing them in a shirt of

4: Walker E-4 (no date) 1934 (ca. 1890) MR13 Fellahin MR13

755 164 292

silk, coloured red, and named the Alexandrian shirt (*al-ḳamīṣ al-Iskandirānī*). (In reality it is made at Edkū[1] and its neighbourhood.)

It has some alleviating effect on skin trouble, for on account of the softness and smoothness of the shirt the skin is less irritated. But the danger, really, is that in the village there is to be found only one shirt set apart for this purpose. Hence it becomes a means of infection and the transmission of this danger. If each ailing child had a new shirt brought to him it would be favourable for a cure, a cure harmless and often beneficial.

IX

"THE BLUE WATER" AND CAUTERIZING THE HEAD

164

HEADACHE (*ṣudā'*)[2] either "moving" or "smiting," is very common [p. 21] in the provinces. Most of the cases we witnessed were among those whose eyes turn backwards and forwards on the occurrence of attacks of glaucoma, the pains arising from "the blue water."[3] They "cure" that ailment, that is, the "moving" variety, by cauterizing the head generally. It is like the other pitiless "cures" whose purpose the quacks know is to create a new and more painful counter-agent by which the patient forgets, or pretends to forget, his original ailment for some days, on account of his pre-occupation with the intensity of his new pain. But that only lasts some days until the pain of the original ailment, whose cause was not rectified, becomes overpowering now that it is away from the influence of the quacks.

752

I knew of a man in the village of Maḥalla Diyāya in the Province of Gharbīya, who repelled the intensity of the pain of this ailment by means of cauterizing the temple. This is an

[1] [A village in the Delta 28½ miles east of Alexandria. Tr.]
[2] [See note, p. 54.]
[3] [The colloquial name in Egypt for glaucoma. Tr.]

533
534
755
787
[171]
[292]

/81 cont'd/

and was also found in the New Kingdom of Ancient Egypt. It is further known from Abyssinia and Nubia. /82/

(d) the Sutari: a tall slim man, wearing a white "galabiah" and a big leather belt, about 20 cm wide, embroidered with cowrie shells on the upper edge and decorated with about one hundred goat-hooves at the lower edge; in front there are two mirrors. The belt is called "El-Mangur" and fixed tightly around the hips, so that rhythmical twisting produces a distinct rattling sound. (4) This man leads the women in front of him during the dance; he has the same function as the "Abu-el-Leel" dancer. [535]

There are further some women who play the duff and drums and a gourd rattle. (5) This band is specialized on the music of Sultan El-Sudani, the sultan of the red jinn and the Habashi spirits.

All three kinds of band participate in a big Zar. One after the other they play their special tunes and songs. These songs are mostly very primitive. The words refer to the Zar which is performed for the sake of sultan ...., his attention is drawn to the sacrifices and music offered on his behalf and he is entreated to pardon the patient and not to harm her (6) any more.

5. The Sultans or "El-Asyaid" (masters):

753
776

These are Jinns or spirits; they are, however, never called thus, as they are believed to be the kings and owners of land and sea, according to one of my informants. These spirits are harmful to persons they possess until their desires are fulfilled. As will be seen later on, these spirits may be classified into regional groups or families. Usually a certain group of spirits dwell in one body and it is only rarely that it is inhabited by more than one group. It is believed that a possessed individual will have to stay this way for the rest of his life, for the spirits will never leave him. The Zar-ceremony thus does not aim at getting rid of the spirit, but at inducing him not to harm the person's body, heart and brain.

[755]
[782]

(4) Zenkovsky S., "Zar and Tambura in Omdurman", Sudan Notes and Records, vol. XXXI, part I, June 1950

(5) Curt Sachs, p. 26

(6) Ahmed Saleh, Folklore, Cairo 1955, p. 124

/83 cont'd/

(c) Coptic and Islamic spirits: 776

1. Christian: "El-Nasrani" or "El-Dēr", i.e. the monastery
2. Moslem: "Si-Yousef" and "Umm-Nagdi"

Strictly speaking they are not really Coptic or Islamic spirits, because religion has nothing to do with it; we can only classify them thus, because of their names and the characters attributed to them.

There are still some Sultans which cannot be classified at the moment. Further investigation may prove that they belong to one of the above groups. These Sultans are "Katu" (8) and "Rinah".

As related before, the possessed person usually consults the Kūdiya who determines the special spirit in possession of the patient and performs a Zar in order to soothe this spirit. The offerings must be made different according to the kind of spirit. They can be summarized in the following three items: 755 782 [791]

(a) Sacrifices of birds, fowls or animals: The Sudanese Sultan requires a black sheep, a black he-goat, or two pigeons of reddish or dark blue colour. The Sultan of the Jinn demands a red cock, a red hen and a red calf. Sultan Rinah must be given a red he-goat and the Gabalawi a red rabbit, a calf or a deer from the mountains. The Arab again desires a camel etc. [825]

(b) Clothes of different kinds of material, shape and colour must be worn during the dance of the Zar-ceremony. In a Zar celebrated for the Sultan of the red Jinn, red silk clothes, red veils and a red head covering must be worn by the possessed person. For the Nasrani spirit a priestly black costume is needed. The Sudanese Sultan Zar necessitates a head-cover knitted with cowries and blue stones, a belt, bracelets worn on the upper arm and on the leg just above the ankles, and a stick all covered with cowries and blue stones. In the Sa'idi Zar a galabiah (men's gown in Egypt) and a stick are needed. For the "Askari" or "Lewa" it is best to employ a military uniform or cap, a stick in lieu of a gun, and green or red ribbons. For the "Arabi" bedouin clothes are needed etc. 755 292 776 [301]

(8) In Sudan there is a Sultan called "Kaltum bint Nub" i.e. Kaltum the daughter of Nubia.

Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

9. 539x 776

A song of Egyptian origin, containing in part the same verses as our own, was communicated to Dalman (Palaestinischer Diwan, p. 141) in Sidon, by a sailor. Of the first verse he remarks: The flag-staff with the crescent, which is mounted over the tomb, is supposed to sway, as a sign that the saint promises to grant the request made to him. [787]

Hizz el-hilāl, ya Seiyid,
yabu bēra' nabawi!
Win 'ilt ana, ya Seiyid,
lazūrak sanawi.

Shake the crescent, O Seiyid,
Thou, with the Prophet's flag!
And if I live, O Seiyid,
I shall visit thee yearly.

1. The flag of the Prophet is green, as are the turbans [292] and sometimes even the clothes, of his descendants in Egypt (the Sherifs).

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

At Work on the Excavations.

a) General.

539x
647
554
466

24.

1. The overseers, who are appointed by the Administration of Antiquities for every field of excavation, are often mere custodians from the museum, or something similar, but in their new position they often like to play the gentleman in their dress.

So this one has put on a ṭarbûsh, the red cap with a dark blue tassel, more familiar to us by the name of fez. [292]

He sits on an elevation, in order to gain a better oversight, and to be out of the dust.

Da-l-efendi ʾaʿid ʿala-l-ʿelwe
biṭ-ṭarbūš wer-raʾabe-l-ḥelwe.

See, the efendi sits upon the height,
With the ṭarbûsh and the sweet neck.

1. Efendi is properly the term of address for Turks (it is the Greek αὐθέντης), now commonly used for officials and all other men of some rank. [576]

2. The word "sweet" is used by the peasant about as frequently as it is by our school-girls. For comparison one should recall the sun-burned, callous neck of a genuine peasant (Vollers). [192]

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

40.

x539 The father hurries home to the festivity.

304 *'Addīni, ya-m'addāwi!*
852 *an-arauwaḥ baladi*
warauwaḥ bis-salāme
waṭāhir waladi.

Ferry me over, ferryman!
I wish to go to my village
And go safely,
And have my son circumcised.

[113] J. H. Churi, in Sea Nile the Desert etc. London 1853, p. 309 (reprinted by Buecher, Arbeit und Rhythmus, p. 429) gives this song with a melody. The first two verses are also to be found in a song of Egyptian origin, which was dictated to Dalman (p. 141) by a sailor in Sidon.

41.

[301] [292] The women are decking out the boy for the procession, with a necklace and a ṭarbûsh (compare No. 24). The mother speaks:

El-'o'd 'o'di, wan-aldumo bc-hawāye!
Gibt eṭ-ṭarābiš, labbasû-li ḥadāye,
wc-'adāit ummo rāide ḥaṭṭāye!

The necklace is my necklace, and I shall string it as I please!
I have brought the ṭarbûsh, dress him (the boy) here before me,
(So smartly) that the enemy of his mother will be sick (from envy)!

[114] 3. This is Maḥmûd's interpretation, but it may be that he is wrong in this interpretation, which demands rāqide instead of rāide.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

Another Contrast.

539x
574
554

104. (The Well-to-do.)

Win gāni abu ṭarbūš,
la'ul-lo: ya marḥābe!
we-afriš-lo is-serīr
wa'allī-lo-l-martabe
wazemzem-lo-l-fingāl
wa'ul-lo: itfaḍḍal gabe!

If someone with a ṭarbūsh comes to me,
I will say to him: "Welcome!"
And make the bed ready for him,
And make the mattress high,
And offer him the (coffee-) cup,
And say to him: "Please thee, without payment!"

[272]

1. The ṭarbūsh is the head-covering of officials and well-to-do citizens (see No. 24). [292]

114.

*539 832 Two people conversing. Ll. 1—2 are the words of the man; ll. 3—5 are spoken by the woman.

Yabu-l-libās el-'aṭīfe
we-dikketo halahalla!
Gibt en-nabāūl, ya sīdi,
wed-da" laḥḍar 'ala īdi!
Ya Moslimīn waḥḥadu Alla!

[342] "Thou with the velvet trowsers
The lacings of which are so fine!"
[301] "I have put on the bracelets, sir,
[304] And the green tatooing is on my hand!
[779] Ye Moslems, testify to the oneness of Allah!"

4. Regarding the tatooing of the hands compare the remark on No. 64. l. 3.

5. The Egyptian sees nothing improper in combining pious expressions with most questionable matters.

115.

Ta'ālā-li, ya wād, ta'ālā-li,
taḥtē sagaret yūḥ, ya ɣazali!

Come to me, my lad, O, come to me
Under the tree of delight, O my gazelle!

2. For "delight", the Arabic has a characteristic exclamation of pleasure (yūḥ!). [192]

8:Schaefer A-8 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

126.

Recognized.

A 639 832 A girl wishes to ingratiate herself with a certain well-to-do young man (ll. 1—2). He repels her, saying that she bears the name of her other lover plainly upon her lips.

Massik bil-ḫēr, ya-Mḥammed mela'ini,
rākib kuḥēle u-rāḥ el-kummē sittīni.
Dē'i'a 'ala šiffetak ḫandar
u-'Osmān Bē! 'Īš' el-banāt ṣandara!
Ya rabb, neggīni.

"Good evening, Moḥammed, who meetest me
Riding a noble mare, and trailing the sleeve yards long."
"[O be gone!] Tatooed in green on thy lips is
The name Osman Bē! — — How fickle are girls when in love!
O Lord, save me [from all danger]!"

2. The last words mean literally: trailing the sleeve sixty (yards) long, a great exaggeration.

3. Literally: "Thou hast green color tatooed and the [304] name etc." Regarding tatooing see No. 64. Girls often have the name of a lover tatooed upon themselves. Compare a song from Endor in Galilee, in Dalman's collection, p. 112. "... the hands a work of the Creator and the blue tatooing over them strewn. On her breast she writes Ḥ and M and D." (These letters stand for Ḥ(a)m(a)d, the name of the lover.)

4. This exclamation has no connection with what precedes, [282] as it would seem from the English. It is one of the innumerable, ejaculatory prayers, which Moslems enjoy repeating.

9: Klunzinger D-5 (1863-1875) 1878
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

than the Friday's ceremony. This day's breakfast, the first for a month, consists, if possible, of fresh or salted fish, with all kinds of fruits and delicacies, in order that the body may be gradually accustomed to its usual course of life. People appear in their holiday clothes, and the shops are shut. On this day shirts covered with a year's dirt are exchanged for brand-new garments even among the poorest, gay silken stuffs infold those parts and members of the body that were previously exposed, costly cloths flutter round the head, and the cheerful colours of the bright red, bright yellow, green, and blue coats show vividly in the morning sun. The little girls, who are allowed to run about the streets and markets only on rare occasions, on this day flutter about like brilliant butterflies through the whole town, in their fire-red clothes, their faces carefully painted and touched up, and their persons hung with ornaments of gold and silver. A nameless joy beams in and from out the heart of everybody. No longer is there any enemy, any hateful unbeliever; high and low are all one, the whole citizens embrace each other—liberty, equality, fraternity. A round of visits is made from house to house; officials and people of the higher ranks give a very imposing reception, and everybody wishes everybody else a happy new year, though the new year will not come for three months yet. After the visitor has embraced his host round the neck, bending over his right and his left shoulder, coffee, and sherbet are brought, or the half-fermented native beer made from barley, and called *buza*. Everybody serving another in any capacity on this day receives from his master a money present or at least a new garment. The women also adorn themselves and hold receptions for each other, but this is done to a greater extent on the following day, as they have too much to do on the first day in preparing liquors for the male guests. Any other kind of work is out of the question. The remaining portion of such holidays passes quietly, the chief times of the day being proclaimed by the reports of a cannon as well as by the muezzin. As early, however, as the second day of the feast some persons who are eager after business open their shops and buy and sell;

[i.e., following the fast of Ramadan—analyst]

9: Klunzinger D-5 (1863-1875) 1878
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trifle, since games of chance are strictly forbidden by the Mohammedan religion, as well as wine and fermented liquors generally. The loser is often jeered, and has his forehead stamped with his own seal as a mark of disgrace; but if he then beats his opponent the latter has to wipe off the mark with his own robe, and is marked by the other.

Next day a grand *Fantasie* is held (a general name given by the Arabs to an entertainment where anything merry is to be seen or heard) in the form of a dance with music and singing. Such an entertainment has little resemblance to a Frankish ball, which has accordingly preserved its own special name of *bals*. In the court, or the space in front of the house, even though this be the street, carpets and straw mats are spread, benches are placed, and many-branched candelabra and brilliant paper lanterns or oil-lamps with coloured water are suspended above the scene of the nocturnal festivities. Soon after night-prayer everybody flocks to the spot, high and low, young and old, invited and uninvited. A number of dancing-girls step up. They take off their street mantles and display themselves in their richest attire, from the gold-embroidered skull-cap, and gold trinkets round the neck and over the heart, to the silken bows upon the polished boots; but on such a public occasion there is no impropriety. The dancing-girls of the ancient Egyptians appear to have worn a very transparent dress; they also are often represented as quite naked; even the short skirts of the modern ballet-girl are seen in some representations. The hair of our dancing-girls smoothed, oiled, and plaited, their dotted faces, their rich and gaudy dresses—all is faultless. The childish forms seem to have become filled out, the haggard faces under the mystic half light of the illumined darkness and the effects of the "Joseph's beauty" (rouge) have recovered their youthful freshness; the really pretty have become charming. The orchestra has already taken up its position on the ground; some gray-bearded fathers are strumming on the two strings of their spindle-shaped fiddles; a jolly musician blows the reed-clarionet; matrons with buckram voices sing to plaintive tunes, beat hand kettle-drums and swing cymbals or tam-

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pieces on a tray, a taper being stuck on every piece. The women move through the house in procession to an accompaniment of singing, trilling, and kettle-drum playing, the boy who is the occasion of the festival behind the henna tray. The mother and the singing-girls receive presents, the boy has a piece of the henna-paste tied into the hollow of his hand, the assembled women do the same for themselves, and all awake next morning with brownish-red palms.

On the day of the circumcision itself, the boy, who is now five to ten years old, is dressed in a new and costly garment, a Cashmere shawl, or it may be a woman's robe (perhaps as a sign that up to this time he has belonged to the harem), a gold-embroidered woman's cap is placed on his head, he is mounted on a horse, and rides in grand procession accompanied by musical instruments round the town. In the evening there is great feasting in his parent's house. Next morning, or on the evening after the procession, the barber performs the circumcision with a razor, an operation customary even among the ancient Egyptians. By it the boy becomes clean, and capable of performing religious exercises, of praying and entering the mosque; this religious act is, therefore, in some respects analogous to the Christian rite of confirmation.

The circumcision of girls is performed privately, and may be guessed to have taken place when, on a customary day, girls in red holiday-clothes swarm about on the streets.

MARRIAGE.

As in the case of circumcision, the preparations for a marriage, in the shape of domestic entertainments and ceremonies, commence months before. As soon as a son exhibits the first signs of puberty his parents think of providing him with a wife. In opposition to the views of other peoples these marriages of children are considered very healthy and judicious throughout the East, even among the Christians. The parents justly believe that they thus provide for the well-being of their children. Long before puberty, which follows in their twelfth or fourteenth year, or still earlier, all the girls are given

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585 Under the red glow of crackling pitch torches, amid the unmelo-
372 lious noise of copper hand-drums, the joyful toot of a double
534 reed-pipe, and the hymns chanted by the schoolmasters and
533 other pillars of the faith, followed by half the inhabitants of the town, the bridegroom walks from night prayer in the mosque to his own dwelling. Here the procession halts. The singers form a ring and sing around the hero of the wedding, for whom the marriage torches form an illumination. A transparent vernal down is springing on his full smooth cheeks, his stature gives hope that he will grow for some years still, his voice as it is heard now and then sounds childishly delicate, or struggles painfully with the voice of manhood. The
• 292 immature form of the youth is clothed in a coat of scarlet cloth, for the first time the manly turban rises on his head, and by his side hangs the marriage sword. Solemnly, seriously, and slowly he paces onwards in the midst of a few of his companions. The procession halts before this or that house, and the chief personages and musicians are regaled with sweetened coffee and sherbet, musket shots sound in the stillness of night, till at last his father's house is reached. Hither the bride has already come in another direction from the
292 house of her parents, from the crown of her head to the sole of her foot enveloped in a Cashmere shawl, which, like the red coat of the bridegroom, is generally borrowed for this day only. She is embraced, and almost carried by two wives, and followed by a crowd of women and girls uttering cries of joy. The house of feasting is lighted up outside with gay lamps and lanterns, and here the people amuse themselves with the dancing-girls, singers, and buffoons, or, if more seriously disposed, listen to the mysterious words of the Koran, or tire themselves out in zikrs, while the bridegroom mounts to the chambers of the women, and lifts the veil of her who has been chosen for him, and whom he has never yet seen, unless, tormented by impatience, he has already, on the occasion of the procession from the mosque, gone through this momentous
300 proceeding in the house of the bride. There she stands before
301 him, the little, tender, lovely maiden, her eyes deeply blackened with kohl, her hands coloured red, her face dotted over